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CIA

SUBJECT: Terms of Reference for a National Intelligence Estimate on Indochina.

A preliminary review within CIA indicates that recent developments in Indochina were anticipated in the several outstanding coordinated estimates (CIA/NE 32-49 and 50-50), and that these developments do not alter conclusions already published regarding the fundamental situation. One aspect of the matter has been specifically treated in a very recent estimate (CIA/NE 58-50). On this basis it could be held that there is no need for a new estimate.

If, however, it is deemed that the sensational nature of recent developments of itself requires a new estimate, if only to reaffirm previous conclusions regarding the fundamental situation.

Another basis for a new estimate might be to bring out particular aspects of the current situation rather than to reach conclusions regarding the fundamental situation. It is impossible to frame specific terms of reference until the specific function of the proposed estimate is determined.

If the purpose is to re-estimate the basic situation, the terms of reference might be as follows:

To estimate the situation in Indochina, with particular reference to:

a. The sources of Viet Minh strength.

b. Vulnerabilities in the Viet Minh position.

c. The reasons for France's inability to regain control.

d. The strengths and weaknesses of the Bao Dai regime.

e. The attitudes of those Vietnamese who support neither Viet Minh nor Bao Dai.

f. The military and political prospects.

g. The possibility of securing [illegible] and implementation of particular actions required to achieve

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b. The consequences of the loss of Vietnam.

4. The possibility of combining such a disaster to Vietnam (or saving Laos, Cambodia, and Siam), with consideration of particular actions required in that area.

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